

COUNTY OF YORK

MEMORANDUM

DATE: August 3, 2004 (PC Mtg. 8/11/04)

TO: York County Planning Commission

FROM: Timothy C. Cross, AICP, Principal Planner

SUBJECT: Application No. UP-640-04, Kenneth Dale Moore

ISSUE

Application No. UP-640-04 requests a Special Use Permit, pursuant to Section 24.1-306 (Category 14, No. 6) of the York County Zoning Ordinance, to authorize the expansion of an existing mini-storage warehouse facility located at 2360 Hampton Highway (Route 134) onto an adjacent 1.23-acre portion of a 2.34-acre parcel currently occupied by the Wash Moore car wash facility and further identified as Assessor's Parcel No. 37-158B.

DESCRIPTION

- Property Owner: Wash Moore Corp.
- Location: 3010 Big Bethel Road (Route 600).
- Area: 1.23 acres of a 2.34-acre parcel
- Frontage: The parcel has approximately 185 feet of frontage on Big Bethel Road. The portion of the parcel designated for mini-storage has no public road frontage.
- Utilities: Public water and sewer
- Topography: Flat
- 2015 Land Use Map Designation: General Business
- Zoning Classification: GB – General Business
- Existing Development: Wash-Moore car wash
- Surrounding Development:
 - North: Single-family home; Exxon gas station
 - East: Stor Moore mini-storage warehouse facility
 - South: Belmont Apartments
 - West: Wash-Moore car wash; Big Bethel Road beyond
- Proposed Development: Expansion of adjacent mini-storage warehouse facility to the east

CONSIDERATIONS/CONCLUSIONS

1. On February 23, 2003, the Board of Supervisors approved a Special Use Permit to authorize the construction of a mini-storage warehouse facility at 2360 Hampton Highway adjacent to the Wash Moore car wash facility located at 3010 Big Bethel Road. The applicant, Kenneth Dale Moore, owns both facilities and wishes to close the rear portion of the car wash while retaining the existing self-service car wash on a resubdivided 1.1-acre parcel along Big Bethel Road.
2. The Comprehensive Plan designates the intersection of Hampton Highway and Big Bethel Road, including the subject property, as a General Business node. Accordingly, the property is zoned GB (General Business).
3. The Wash Moore car wash facility was built in 2000 when car washes were permitted as a matter of right in the GB zoning district; today a car wash on GB-zoned property would require a Special Use Permit. As such, it is considered a legally conforming special use. Wash Moore facilities include an 8,500-square foot car wash building, located to the rear of the property, in which oil changes and lube jobs are also provided and a self-service car wash station toward the front of the property. Hampered by a lack of visibility from Hampton Highway and various site characteristics, the business has not been successful and the applicant wishes to close the car wash/oil change operation and redevelop the site as an expansion of the adjacent mini-storage facility while retaining the self-service car wash facility. The car wash/oil change building would be converted to a mini-storage warehouse building with interior units. In addition, according to the sketch plan, a new 10,400-square foot building with interior units would be built along with 8,180 square feet of warehouse space contained within two new buildings (with exterior units) and additions to existing buildings. A total of 31 new exterior units and an unspecified number of interior units are shown on the plan. This would involve a resubdivision of the property, in effect shifting the existing boundary line between the Stor Moore and Wash Moore properties approximately 250 feet to the west. With the reconfiguration of the site, the existing twenty feet (20') of landscaping that separates the two parcels would be eliminated and a new landscaped strip of equal length (albeit shorter since the parcel is narrower) established along the new property boundary (10' on each side).

Staff notes that there are several deficiencies with the sketch plan submitted by the applicant. The plan shows that two existing warehouse buildings will be expanded to incorporate additional units; however, both buildings are already 200 feet long, which is the maximum permitted length of any mini-storage warehouse building, pursuant to Section 24.1-484(g) of the Zoning Ordinance. Therefore, no addition to either building will be permitted. In addition, the plan shows no additional parking; since the existing Stor Moore facility has no parking spaces above the minimum requirement, the addition of any new units will require additional parking at a ratio of 1½ spaces per ten (10) cubicles (approximately 24 spaces).

4. Mini-storage warehouses do not generate significant traffic; in fact, according to the ITE (Institute of Transportation Engineers) *Trip Generation* manual (7th Edition), the proposed warehouses would generate less traffic (an estimated 68 trips per weekday, including 4 in the AM peak hour and 7 in the PM peak hour) than almost any other commercial use. Access to the site would be via the existing entrance on Route 134. According to the applicant's concept plan, the existing driveway off Big Bethel Road would continue to serve the existing self-service car wash facility, beyond which it would be gated to allow emergency vehicle access only.
5. The mini-storage facility, the car wash facility, and the Belmont apartment complex to the south are all architecturally compatible with one another. Staff has included a condition of approval requiring that any new construction also be compatible. Specifically, the outward-facing walls would be constructed of architectural block utilizing the same color scheme as the existing mini-storage, car wash and the apartment complex. All bay doors would face inward, as required by the Zoning Ordinance performance standards applicable to all warehousing units.

A Type 25 (25') transitional buffer exists along the rear of the Wash Moore property adjacent to the Belmont Apartments. In addition, there is a fifty-foot (50') perimeter landscape buffer surrounding the apartment complex, so there is a minimum of 75 feet of landscaping between the car wash facility and the apartment complex. The buildings in this section of the apartment complex are all garages; therefore, none of the residential units to the rear of the property will be affected by the expansion. For this reason, staff is not recommending, as it did with the original use permit, that increased planting ratios be required to the rear of the property. Finally, it should be noted that mini-storage warehouses typically generate less activity and noise than do car wash and oil change establishments. Therefore, the existing single-family detached home located on Hampton Highway in front of the car wash/oil change building should experience a net decrease in noise impacts if this application is approved.

6. Since the existing Stor Moore facility has a freestanding sign, no additional sign would be needed for the proposed expansion, and none will be permitted. Furthermore, as long as the self-service car wash facility is on a separate parcel and does not share access with the mini-storage facility, no advertising of the mini-storage business will be permitted on the existing Wash Moore sign. A condition addressing signage is included in the approving resolution.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff (and the Commission) recommended denial of the use permit authorizing the existing Stor Moore facility on Hampton Highway; in fact, both the staff and the Commission have recommended denial of a Special Use Permit for a mini-storage facility in that location on four separate occasions. These recommendations were based on the Comprehensive Plan and its emphasis on promoting nodal rather than strip commercial development along the Route 134 corridor and the need to preserve the viability of this node for some higher caliber commercial use that would generate more tax revenue than

mini-storage. Staff felt that risking the viability of a large portion of this commercial node for a use that generates limited revenue for the County is not what the Comprehensive Plan envisions. Now that the mini-storage facility is in place, however, the development – or redevelopment – potential of the 1.23-acre site in question is very limited. Expansion of the adjacent mini-storage facility onto property currently occupied by the car wash/oil change operation will ensure that the property will continue as an economically beneficial use – albeit a relatively low revenue generator – and prevent the establishment of yet another vacant commercial building in the County. The proposed development is not likely to have any adverse impact on surrounding properties; indeed, the home in front of Wash Moore will likely benefit since mini-storage tends to be a much quieter use than car washes and oil changes. The apartment buildings to the rear of the property will continue to be well buffered from the proposed warehouses. Therefore, based on the considerations and conclusions as noted, staff recommends that the Commission forward this application to the Board of Supervisors with a recommendation of approval subject to the conditions contained in proposed Resolution No. PC04-18. To a great extent, these conditions mirror the conditions of approval for the existing Stor Moore facility on Hampton Highway. Some of the previous conditions – such as those addressing monument signage and access to Hampton Highway – are not applicable and have not been included.

TCC

Attachments

- Zoning Map
- Site Map
- Sketch Plan
- Photo-simulation of proposed development
- Proposed Resolution No. PC04-18